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ABSTRACT

The emphasis in physical education appears to be changing toward a more humanistic education to counteract a dehumanizing trend with the emphasis on mechanization, efficiency, and technological innovation. This paper includes the results from a small survey of physical educators representing five groups: (1) curriculum theorists, (2) researchers, (3) directors, (4) supervisors, and (5) teachers. Three questionnaires were administered, each requiring the respondent to evaluate a list of purposes to determine their validity in providing guidance for program development for both the present and the future. Respondents were asked to rate their importance on a zero to seven scale for both present and future physical education curriculum development, and to rank the list of purposes in order of importance. A summary of ratings and rankings indicate changes in the concept of purpose in physical education. Neuro-muscular efficiency, mechanical efficiency, and competition are no longer perceived as primary purposes in future physical education programs. Instead, there is an increasing emphasis on physical education for the joy of movement, and for self-knowledge. (DMT)

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PURPOSES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION - TODAY AND TOMORROW

St. Augustine said, "Time is a three fold present: the present as we experience it, the past as a present memory and the future as a present expectation." Daniel Bell went on to say, "By that criterion, the world of the year 2000 has already arrived, for in the decisions we make now, in the way we design our environment and thus sketch the lines of constraints, the future is committed. The future is not an overarching leap into the distance; it begins in the present." (Bell, 1967, p. 369)

It is for these reasons that we must be concerned about physical education purposes for today and for tomorrow. One of the responsibilities of the curriculum planner is to help translate societal demands, both present and future, into educational goals...essentially a decision-making process. Decisions can be made more effectively when a pattern of factors affecting the decisions is considered and they will be more consistent when the factors and decisions are viewed as part of some understandable curriculum structure (Goodlad and Richter, 1966).

A conceptual framework is a structure that helps to reveal the relationships among complex, related, and interacting phenomena (Goodlad and Richter, 1966:1). Used as a curriculum framework, this structure helps identify and organize the knowledge within a discipline for the purpose of improving decision-making at the curriculum planning stage. The development of such a structure should be based on societal demands,

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both present and future and the responses of a particular discipline to those demands. The major concepts of a discipline provide the scope for curriculum decision-making. Further, the curriculum framework should provide some direction for the selection of appropriate learning experiences and the organization of these experiences into acceptable learning sequences. Yet, it must remain dynamic and flexible to allow new responses and new emphases as societal needs and demands change.

The Purpose-Process Curriculum Framework is such a conceptual framework. In a preliminary evaluation study it was determined that the concepts defined in this framework provided purposes for Physical Education for both today and for the future, but that shifts in emphasis on the various purposes may be appropriate as we plan programs for the future.

The Delphi technique was used to evaluate the selected list of purposes for physical education defined by the Purpose-Process Curriculum Framework, to determine their validity in providing guidance for program development for both the present and the future. Three questionnaires were sent to a panel of judges selected from five groups of physical educators: curriculum theorists, researchers, directors, supervisors, and teachers. Each of the questionnaires required the respondent to react to the purpose statements and to rate their importance on a 0-7 scale for both present and future physical education curriculum development, then to rank the list of purposes in order of importance, again for present and future considerations. The respondents were given a summary of the ratings and rankings of each questionnaire and a

summary of the rationales supporting those ratings and rankings included by the respondents, as a means of providing feedback for group decision-making. As a result, changes in ratings and rankings occurred from Round I to Round III and there were significant differences in ratings on the present scale and ratings on the future scale. It is this aspect of the study that suggests some interesting ideas for planning for now and for the future.

Not surprisingly, the purpose, Cirulo-Respiratory Efficiency, was rated the highest on both the present and future scales with the mean rating increasing from 5.76 on the present scale to 6.07 on the future scale (go over again the 7-point scale). It is obvious that physical educators view this purpose as one of the unique, important directives for development of physical education programs. No matter what happens to societal and cultural development, physiological needs will remain, at least until evolution alters those needs. The increase in ratings suggests the concern over increasing mechanization and decreasing physical demands. Thus, programs of the future must have at least the same emphasis on physiological development as there is now. However, the increase in rating of importance also suggests that even more attention should be given to this purpose as we develop programs for the future.

Five of the purpose mean ratings increased by at least one-half a scale unit from present to future ratings. Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum (1961) suggested that a one-half unit change on a 0-7 rating scale

could suggest a meaningful change in that rating. These purposes were: Joy of Movement, Self-Knowledge, Catharsis, Awareness, and Expression. These changes may be partially explained by the trend toward more humanistic education to counteract a dehumanizing trend with the emphasis on mechanization, efficiency, and technological innovation. The changes in ratings of these purposes may suggest that in the future, movement involvement may be the avenue for creative expression, release from rote mechanical patterns, and release from societal tensions and frustrations.

The lowest ranked purpose was Simulation. This purpose, originally called Masking, was intended to provide direction for strategy development. However, it was apparently interpreted in the more negative sense of deception. Comments from respondents certainly supported the idea that we must help students become more expressive and open, more humane, perhaps, again as a reaction to a dehumanizing trend.

When the purposes were ranked in order of importance, other shifts from present to future give rise to interesting conjectures. Purposes that shifted from lower-ranked positions on the present scale to higher ranked positions on the future scale were: Self-Knowledge, Catharsis, Awareness, Spatial Relationships, Expression, Cultural Preservation, and Clarification. Purposes which shifted from higher-ranked positions on the present scale to lower-ranked positions on the future scale were: Neuro-Muscular Efficiency, Mechanical Efficiency, Teamwork, Competition, Object Projection, and Reception. Competition and Object Projection had the largest negative shifts, they dropped 6 ranking units from the

present to the future scale and Expression had the highest position shift; it moved up 7 ranking units from the present to the future scale. Perhaps this shifting suggests that physical education programs should increasingly stress the relationship of movement to the maintenance of psychic equilibrium and to adaptation to one's environment, both physical and social. At the same time, perhaps physical education programs should decrease the stress on sports skills development and game play. Could this suggest that the programs for the future will have courses such as: Dance-Drama, Creative Gymnastics, Expressive Movement, Meditative Movement, The Body, The Self??

The change in the purposes ranking highest on the present ratings to those ranking highest on the future ratings supports somewhat the idea previously expressed. On the present scale, the first four purposes were: Circulo-Respiratory Efficiency, Neuro-Muscular Efficiency, Joy of Movement and Participation. On the future scale, the first four were: Circulo-Respiratory Efficiency, Joy of Movement, Self-Knowledge, and Participation. This seems to suggest some shift in emphasis on skill development to emphasis on the utilization of movement activities to better understand one's self.

It would not be accurate to suggest that sports and games will be gone from future programs. The respondents generally indicated that no purpose should be deleted, with the exception of Simulation. Thus, all of the purposes which guide curriculum developers to utilize sports and games as learning activities would still be important in determining

the complete scope of the program. The ratings did suggest, however, that some changes in emphases may be necessary to help prepare students to live in a time that may be quite different from the present.

Unfortunately, the data from this study does not give us the magic formula for determining when to start emphasizing the future development, thus when to change the program emphases by altering relationships among the purposes. However, if we accept St. Augustine's conjecture that the future is just a three fold present, perhaps it is now time to begin to change the emphases on the various purposes for physical education.

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